

Green Mountain Club LONG TRAIL PROTECTION 2022 Update

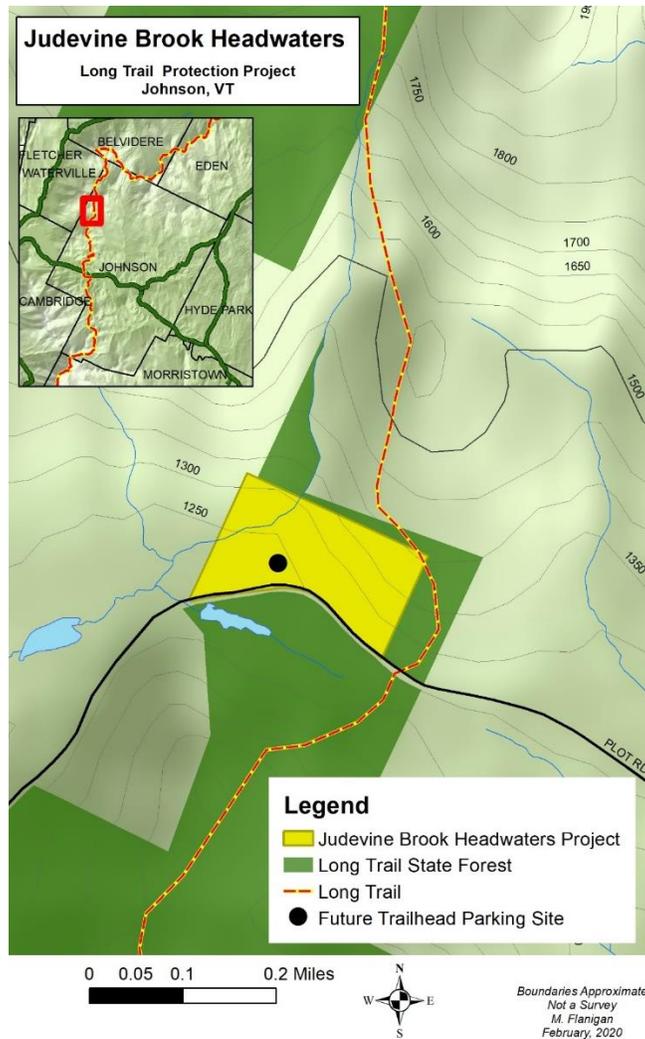
To the Senate Institutions Committee

37 Years Conserving Public Access to Vermont's Long Trail



UPDATE ON FY22's LONG TRAIL APPROPRIATION

GMC is grateful to the Vermont General Assembly for its support of the FY22 Long Trail Appropriation of \$85,000. GMC has purchased the 12.9-acre "Judevine Brook Headwaters" property in Johnson and is working with the Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation to transfer the land to the State within the calendar year. This forested land hosts Long Trail treadway and the future location of an off-road trailhead parking area. It will be incorporated into the Long Trail State Forest with an easement held by GMC.



STATUS OF THE LONG TRAIL PROTECTION CAMPAIGN

In 1986, the Green Mountain Club launched the Long Trail Protection Campaign with the goal of acquiring land and easements by working with willing sellers to protect a continuous route for the Long Trail.

Over the last 37 years, 88.5 miles of Long Trail have been permanently protected through the conservation of over 25,000 acres in 94 conservation projects. This work has largely been made possible thanks to the strong support of the State of Vermont through capital appropriations for the Long Trail Protection Campaign, which has contributed over \$3.5 million to the land protection effort to date.

There remains approximately 6 miles of the Long Trail with no permanent legal protection, spread over 14 private properties.

Conserving the remaining sections of the Long Trail is estimated to cost \$1.5 million. The ongoing support of the Vermont General Assembly directly, and through funding for the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, is critical to the goal of permanently protecting public access to the entire Long Trail.

While GMC does not have a Long Trail protection project that is ready to be presented for a capital appropriation this year, GMC is happy to let the Committee know that we are working through a planning process to chart the future scope of GMC's land protection work. Using recreation and natural resource data, along with feedback from the local and hiking communities, GMC is reexamining what resources need to be protected to ensure that the Long Trail remains a world class recreation resource for the State of Vermont. GMC expects the planning effort to wrap up Spring of 2023 and would welcome an opportunity to share the results with the Committee.

GREEN MOUNTAIN CLUB and the LONG TRAIL

The Green Mountain Club (GMC), founded in 1910, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to maintain and protect the Long Trail —the oldest long-distance hiking trail in the nation. The Long Trail runs for 272-miles along the crest of the Green Mountains from Massachusetts to Canada.

The Vermont Legislature, in 1985, recognized the Long Trail as a

“unique, historic and irreplaceable resource, whose protection is of great benefit to the people of the State of Vermont”

and resolved that the

“General Assembly supports the efforts of the Green Mountain Club to protect the Long Trail System.”

For more information about the Long Trail Protection Campaign, please contact Mike DeBonis, Green Mountain Club Executive Director at (802) 241-8212 or mdebonis@greenmountainclub.org

